

THE
MURDEROUS
Midwife,

WITH HER
ROASTED
Punishment:

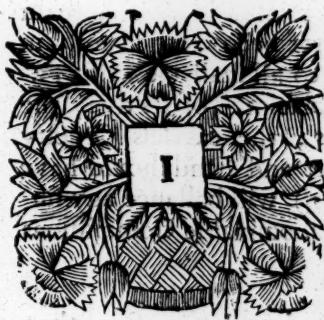
BEING
A True and Full RELATION
OF

A MIDWIFE that was put into an
IRON CAGE with Sixteen WILD-CATS,
and so Roasted to Death, by hanging over a Fire,
for having found in Her House-of-office
no less than Sixty two Children,
at PARIS in France:

Printed in the Year 1673.



THE
MURDEROUS MIDWIFE,
WITH HER
ROASTED PUNISHMENT, &c.



IF we consider the (almost yearly) sad Examples of desperate and horrid Murderers, who, for all their Craft, Artifices, and Contrivances, to blind the Eye of Providence, and to deceive and prevent their Fate, yet have met their just dooms, and never escaped discovery, and sometimes singular, remarkable, and direful Punishments; We have no small cause
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to admire, that Christianity, judicious Severity, and the horrible, but meritorious rewards that crown the detestable deeds of so many Malefactors, are not powerful enough to frighten (if Religion can't persuade) all barbarous and inhumane resolutions from action, if it did not quash intirely the budding thoughts thereof. Passing by many Stories that for the instruction of the World would have deserved the Printing, I shall now only confine my self to the description of a Relation, not stranger than true; there being few persons (especially of Quality) about Court, or Merchants about the City who have any Correspondence at *Paris*, that either by Letters from their Friends residing there, or by the Reports of such Acquaintance as either came from the place, and told it them for diversion of tedious time, or to content their Curiosity, or related it by chance in their hearing; that have not been satisfied fully in what I am going to expose to all shall view this Paper. The Story (for the blackness of its dye, the innocency of the Sufferers, the careless Cruelty of the Actress, whose heart and hand should have been guilty of more softness) will ballance any single one, if not all the most abominable Commissions of single Persons.

At *Paris* in *France* (and no longer since than in the Month of last *May*) there lived a Midwife (the Street I cannot exactly tell) in great Credit and Repute, being made use of by most of the Great Ladies

Ladies there, as indeed she was Mistress of her Trade, and skilful (though not honest) in her Art. She kept a large House for the entertainment of persons of all conditions; conditions I may well say, seeing some Countrey-Gentry lodged there for the fairness of her Chambers, others took up her Rooms for the more convenience of her advice and assistance in Childbirth. Some again of meaner Quality, came to be delivered by her, with worser intentions than for a safe delivery, upon whose success lies the stress of my Relation. What wickedness and villainous imaginations hath this Age more universally afforded in Mortals than any other! And who could have fancied any *Egyptian* had been of such a Calling in *Christendome*? Certainly it is to be fear'd, the Temptations of such Professors must be costly and frequent, in a time, when persons without the least regard hazard both Bodies and souls, and only for a few momentary pleasures. But to our purpose.

This Midwife, by her vast practice and chargeable rates in those many years she went uninterruptedly through her business, had gotten as much Wealth as Fame; till at length Providence, to appear the brighter in the manifestation of its Omniscience through the darkest Clouds of Treachery, and to save many who might be designed a long time beforehand to dye, and to have their eyes closed to all mortality, so soon as they had once become miserable Mortals; nay, without the command for it by a *Pharaoh*: The All-seeing Eye, I say, would permit

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no longer those private dispatches were made under her roof of Iniquity, but disclosed her thus :

A Gentleman that lived near her, was ever and anon troubled with fearful Dreams; and his disturbed Spirit would Divinely suggest to him, that this Woman was otherwise than she seem'd : For he had observed a great resort of young Women to her House ; had been certainly informed a many were made Mothers in it ; but could seldom see or hear of any Children either about the House, or being put to Nurse. These usual and perplexing thoughts would not let him rest, until he had communicated his mind to some Friends, who joyntly weighing the reasons of his perturbations, concluded there was cause enough to suspect, and resolved to search speedily further into it. Accordingly forging a Rumour that one of them had lost some Plate, and that they had gotten a Warrant to search the Neighbourhood, beginning formally and cunningly to perform the execution of their design, they run over several other adjoining Houses, till they were come to the Midwives, who, for all her guilt, could not foresee the approach of Justice, and the punishment her Crimes were drawing her into.

Briefly, as it was deliberated, they march immediately to the Privy, which was none of the narrowest, and with Instruments plunging the place, they quickly poked out with their Tools first a Child, that lookt as if it had been newly cast in there. Though they

they might well, through amazement at such a deplorable spectacle, and the stench that proceeded from the Office, have remitted a stricter enquiry to another time; yet Providence so supernaturally strengthened them, as they continued till they had brought out the Sixty second Infant; which astonishment and pity, together with their smell, would not let them much pass over with their eyes.

Nevertheless having so wary an eye on the Authress as to watch, and upon finding the first Child, to secure her, when the emptiness of the Privy gave them time to ponder on Justice, they sent to acquaint the Officers Criminal, who hastened thither to behold the Corps of a company of Babes; some almost rotted to nothing, others whom time had not so much damaged, and some whose fresh interment had disfigured them only through the nastiness of the Tomb. In short, the Woman was examined, whose too guilty Conscience flew in her face, and suffered her not to make one No, or to deny any thing she was accused of. According to their form of Tryal, her Process was drawn; she was Condemned, and in order to her Execution on the 28th of the abovesaid *May*, in the place decreed for suffering, was first erected a high Gibbet; under it was made a Fire of the best Fuel could be had, to yield the greatest heat; then she being brought thither, and ended her last Prayers, she was put into an Iron Cage with Sixteen Wild-Cats gotten on purpose. The Cage being hung appointedly over the Fire, in
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that manner she and her Fellow-sufferers were Roasted to death ; a punishment, of such strangeness, but of that fulness, as will make her to be remembred to the Worlds end, if it works not on all present and to come, to strive against Temptations that bring at their heels so much Infamy and Torture, besides what they shall endure in the *Greatest of Days*.

Thus had she the recompence of her deserts, and may the same be served on all that value the life of Man no more. But to hinder any Mischiefs that the Letting of Lodgings by Midwives might beget for the future, the Parliament have Enacted, and issued it out, *That no Midwife, on pain of death, offer to Lett out so much as one Room, or more, nor dare to entertain any person to be Delivered in her House.*

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